Met Office

August 2011

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1981-2010.

UK overview

With areas of low pressure over or close to the UK for most of the month, the weather was predominantly unsettled and cool. Showers or more persistent rainfall occurred on many days, especially across Scotland and northern England.

It was a rather cool month overall, with cloud cover often suppressing daytime temperatures. Mean temperatures ranged from about 0.5 °C below the 1981-2010 average over eastern England and the Midlands to about 1.0 °C below over Northern Ireland, much of Scotland and parts of western England and Wales. It was the coolest August since 1993 across Scotland and Northern Ireland, but similar to August 2010 across England and Wales. The rainfall pattern was highly variable, with over twice the average amount in the eastern half of Scotland parts of north-east England and locally across central southern England. In contrast, parts of Northern Ireland, Wales and the west Midlands were drier than average - with less than 50% of normal in the west Midlands. It was a rather dull month in all areas, with sunshine totals typically about 75% of normal.

A maximum temperature of 30.3 °C was recorded at Gravesend (Kent) on the 3rd. A minimum temperature of 0.5 °C was recorded at Lough Navar (County Fermanagh) on the 31st. In the 24 hours ending at 0900 on the 11th, 108.2 mm of rainfall was recorded at Blaenau Ffestiniog (Gwynedd). A wind gust of 68 mph was recorded at Rosehearty (Aberdeenshire) on the 28th.

Weather Impacts

Wet weather caused flooding of roads, rail lines and properties at various times during the month.

On the 3rd, torrential rain caused flooding of homes and businesses in parts of north and east Yorkshire, especially Humberside. Heavy rainfall on the 6th resulted in localised flooding of roads and homes in parts of County Durham and Northumberland. The road and rail network in central and southern Scotland was badly affected by persistent heavy rain on the 10th and 11th. Disruption was widespread, including train services between Glasgow and Edinburgh being suspended for a time. On the 18th, prolonged heavy rain across parts of central southern England led to localised flooding. Dorset, Hampshire and Berkshire were worst affected with roads closed and properties inundated, especially in the Bournemouth area.

The showers and longer spells of rain interrupted some sporting and other outdoor events, and there were several days with localised flooding across eastern Scotland.

England diary of highlights

A predominantly unsettled month, with plenty of showery days and more persistent rain at times. The mean temperature was 0.7 °C below the 1981-2010 average, similar to August 2010. Rainfall amounts were very variable. Over twice the normal amount fell across parts of north-east England and locally in central southern England, whereas parts of the Midlands were drier than average, with less than 50% of normal towards the Welsh border. It was a rather dull month, with about 80% of the normal sunshine.

1st to 3rd

It was a rather humid start to the month, with showers and longer spells of rain at times. Scattered showers became heavy and thundery across some southern and eastern areas, with accumulations of over 20 mm locally; in the 24 hours to 0900 on 4th, 26.6 mm was recorded at Leconfield (East Yorkshire) and 30.1 mm at Shanklin (Isle of Wight). Although it was generally rather cloudy, there were some sunny spells, particularly across the south-east. It was generally warm, and very warm at times in the south-east, with temperatures peaking at 30.3 °C on 3rd at Gravesend (Kent).

4th to 8th

Weather fronts moved in from the west during 4th, bringing rain. This heralded an unsettled period, with showers across much of England, which turned heavy, thundery and prolonged at times, giving some high accumulations in places. On 6th over 25 mm was recorded across Northumberland and Durham, with 39.6 mm at Wallington (Northumberland). There were sunny spells too, with maxima around 23 °C across the east on 5th and 25.6 °C at St. James's Park (London), although temperatures then became closer to normal.

9th to 17th

A drier and more settled day on 9th, although this was short-lived. It turned unsettled again from 10th, although this time rain tended to move across in bands, turning heavy in places. In the 24 hours to 0900 on 11th, well over 25 mm fell across much of north-west England and the Pennines, with 78.6 mm at Malham Tarn (North Yorkshire). There were plenty of drier, sunny periods too, mainly in the south at first, although occasional showers still developed at times. Temperatures were generally around or just above average through the day, with 23.4 °C at Gravesend on 14th. Overnight temperatures started rather high but became increasingly chilly, with minima of 5.4 °C at Exeter (Devon) and 4.5 °C at South Newington (Oxfordshire) early on 15th.

18th to 27th

It remained unsettled through this period, although rain became generally more showery in nature again, with occasional prolonged spells of rain too. On 18th, heavy rain spread north-eastwards from Dorset towards London, giving 59.5 mm at Reading (Berkshire). A band of persistent rain in a line from Bristol to East Yorkshire gave totals of around 20 - 30 mm in 3 to 4 hours on 25th. Through the rest of the period, there were scattered, heavy showers, thundery at times, but also some sunny spells. Temperatures were generally around normal or a little below in spells of rain, although it was rather warm at times in the south.

28th to 31st

High pressure began to build from the south-west late on 28th, bringing more settled and mainly dry weather. It was generally rather cloudy at first, with a few light, isolated showers in northern parts, although more sunny spells developed. Temperatures were generally rather below normal for the time of year.

Wales diary of highlights

Generally unsettled and rather cool, with plenty of showers and only short fine spells. The mean temperature was 0.8 °C below the 1981-2010 average, similar to August 2010. Rainfall amounts approached average across the north-west, but elsewhere it was drier than normal particularly across central and eastern areas where less than 75% of normal fell. It was a rather dull month, with about 75% of the normal sunshine.

1st to 5th

The month started cloudy, with outbreaks of light rain and drizzle and more persistent rain later in the day. This rain cleared away eastwards during 2nd, and dry and fine conditions followed, before further rain arrived late on 3rd. This rain cleared eastwards during 4th, with sunny spells following. Mainly dry and fine on 5th, with sunny spells.

6th to 9th

Showers dominated the weather during these days. Scattered showers occurred from the start of 6th, with a few turning heavier later in the day. These showers died away overnight, allowing a dry start to 7th before heavy showers spread across much of Wales during the afternoon. They became thundery and locally very heavy. The showers on 8th were not as heavy, and more scattered. By 9th the showers were only light, and confined to Pembrokeshire during the morning, after which they died away.

10th to 16th

During this period rain affected Wales at times, with only temporary dry and fine spells. At first the rain was confined to the north, but was also heavy and persistent. During 10th over 25 mm of rain fell over much of north-west Wales with 50 mm across parts of Snowdonia; Capel Curig (Conwy) recorded 58.2 mm. Meanwhile, across the south it was dry with sunny spells on 10th. The 11th was a generally dry and cloudy day, followed by a cloudy start on 12th with hill fog and patchy light rain. Later on 12th this rain became more persistent and widespread. The rain cleared eastwards by dawn on 13th, and a mostly dry and cloudy day followed. The 14th was dry and fine, as was 15th until the end of the day when further rain arrived. This rain cleared during 16th, with scattered heavy showers then developing.

17th to 23rd

A quieter period of weather, with only a brief period of rain late on 18th and a few showers on 20th and 21st. The rest of the time it was dry, with often cool nights, and bright and fine by day. On 18th Trawsgoed (Ceredigion) had a maximum temperature of 20.8 °C.

24th to 28th

Showery and rather cool during this period. The showers were often heavy and sometimes thundery from 24th to 26th. During 27th the initially heavy showers gradually became lighter and confined to the west coast, leaving a rather cool day on 28th with a few light showers.

29th to 31st

It was predominantly dry and cloudy, with temperatures still below average. On 29th and 30th, temperatures were widely below 14 °C inland, with maxima of 12.9 °C at Lake Vyrnwy (Powys) on 29th and 13.3 °C at Sennybridge (Powys) on 30th.

Scotland diary of highlights

A predominantly cloudy and rather cool month with showers and longer outbreaks of rain at times. The mean temperature was 0.9 °C below the 1981-2010 average, making it the coolest August since 1993. Rainfall amounts were generally above average, particularly across the eastern half where over twice the average amount fell with almost three times normal in parts of the south-east. However, rainfall was near average in the west. It was a rather dull month, especially towards the south-east, with about 75% of the average sunshine.

1st to 5th

Mainly cloudy on 1st with scattered showers. Cloudy with heavy rain over central and eastern areas on 2nd, with 25 mm at Inverbervie (Aberdeenshire), but brighter in the west. Dry with some sunshine on 3rd and temperatures widely rising to 21 - 23 °C. Rain, locally heavy, moved northwards during 4th with drier, brighter weather following to the south. The rain cleared the mainland early on 5th but lingered over Shetland, and it was bright with isolated showers elsewhere.

6th to 11th

Bright with a few showers on 6th but rain, occasionally heavy, spread into southern and eastern parts later. 24-hour totals to 0900 on 7th were widely in excess of 25 mm from the Borders to Inverness with 42.2 mm at Lentran (Highland), 46.8 mm at Kindrogan (Perth and Kinross) and 38.4 mm at Leuchars (Fife). Rain for most on 7th, heavy and prolonged, especially across the north and east with 24-hour totals again over 20 mm, including 33.6 mm at Lossiemouth (Moray). The rain became confined to the north-east on 8th, and it was brighter elsewhere with scattered showers. A bright day on 9th before rain spread in overnight becoming heavy and persistent, except in the Northern Isles, on 10th. 24-hour totals to 0900 on 11th were widely in excess of 30 mm across central areas, with 51.0 mm at Leuchars, 58.4 mm at Salsburgh (Lanarkshire) and 65.4 mm at both Benmore and Lochgilphead (Argyll and Bute). It was also very cool, with temperatures below 13 °C and Aviemore (Highland) peaking at just 11.1 °C. Bright in the north on 11th with heavy rain slowly clearing from central and southern parts.

12th to 25th

Mainly cloudy on 12th with rain edging north-eastwards during the afternoon and evening. Rather cloudy with scattered showers on 13th and persistent rain over Shetland, but Lossiemouth reached 22.5 °C. Bright on 14th with scattered showers, some thundery. Scattered showers on 15th with outbreaks of rain moving into the south-west later. This rain, locally heavy, spread north-eastwards on 16th followed by sunny spells and scattered showers on 17th. Rather cloudy on 18th with scattered showers, some heavy during the evening in the east. Dry with sunny spells at first on 19th but light rain spread eastwards later. Frequent showers in the north-west on 20th elsewhere mainly dry with sunny spells, although some rain in the south during the evening. The 21st was bright with sunny spells and scattered showers. It was mostly dry and cloudy on 22nd and 23rd. Shetland was wet on 24th, while the north-east was sunny and scattered thundery showers developed elsewhere. The 25th saw sunny intervals but also scattered showers, some thundery.

26th to 29th

Sunny intervals and heavy slow-moving thunderstorms on 26th, with 27.2 mm in an hour that afternoon at Threave (Dumfries and Galloway). Rain and strong winds developed in the north later on 27th. Gales and heavy rain on 28th, especially across the north, with 78.2 mm recorded at Resallach (Highland). Further rain and strong winds across the far north on 29th before becoming more settled.

30th to 31st

The last two days were mostly cloudy with light showers in the north and west.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

A predominantly cloudy and rather cool month, with plenty of showery days and a few longer outbreaks of rain. The mean temperature was 1.0 °C below the 1981-2010 average, and it was the coolest August since 1993. Rainfall amounts were below average, particularly across southern areas where less than 75% of normal fell. It was a rather dull month, with about 75% of the normal sunshine.

1st to 4th

Cloudy on 1st with light patchy rain and 2nd also started cloudy with some drizzle, but the afternoon was brighter. Mainly dry with some sunshine on 3rd and a few showers in the west during the evening. Rain at first on 4th then drier and brighter with scattered showers, the temperature at Helens Bay (County Down) reaching 23.1 °C.

5th to 9th

A few isolated showers on 5th. The 6th was cloudy with scattered showers, some thundery. Further showers on 7th, but a band of prolonged rain moved southwards in the afternoon. The 8th was bright with isolated

showers. A bright day on 9th before some light rain spread in during the evening.

10th to 13th

Some heavy bursts of rain overnight and on 10th gave totals over 20 mm across the north and west, although it was warmer with Murlough (County Down) reaching 20.7 °C. Cloudy with showery outbreaks of rain on 11th, but still warm in the south. Mostly cloudy on 12th with outbreaks of rain, some heavy, and rather cloudy on 13th with light showers.

14th to 28th

The 14th was bright with showers, some with thunder. Dry and bright for much of 15th, but outbreaks of rain in the evening. The 16th started damp then became bright and breezy with a few showers. Some sunshine on 17th and 18th with scattered showers breaking out. A chilly start on 19th, with temperatures widely below 5 °C, otherwise sunny spells and showers. Mainly dry with sunny spells on 20th. Sunny spells and scattered showers on 21st, then mainly dry and bright on 22nd and 23rd, if rather cloudy. Rain early on 24th then a mixture of sunshine and scattered thunderstorms. Sunny intervals and showers on 25th and 26th with a few thunderstorms. The 27th and 28th were bright with showers.

29th to 31st

The last few days were mainly cloudy and dry, apart from a few light showers on 29th and 30th. It was cool with daytime temperatures widely below 15 °C and falling to 2.5 °C at Castlederg (County Tyrone) early on 31st.

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